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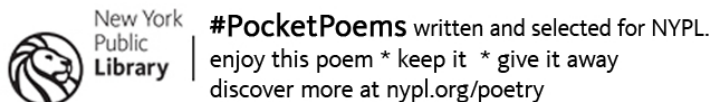
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Higgledy piggledy,
Ernest H. Shackleton
Couldn't man up for the
Polar Bear Swim.
No bears in the South Pole, he
Geo-pedantically
Whined but he knew he was
Being a wimp.

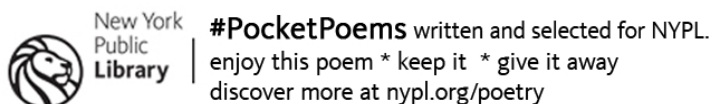
Adrienne Raphel



NO GHOST THO'

Pull a black pyramid
from your mouth. Spit-glistened
affair of sphere swallow
not merely a theory of beauty.
Province knows the boundary
of what is fearful. The object
called forth, more to say.
Lead back to something.
Belong here with me among
the smallest of means.

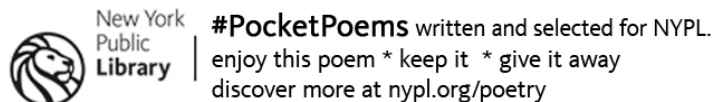
Katy Chrisler



Heretofore Unuttered

As if god, despite his compulsions, were decent
and hadn't the tendency to throw off
all appearance of decorum, here I am
admiring this single violet orchid.
How lucky am I to go unnoticed
or so I imagine, when, at this writing,
there is a red-tailed hawk, somewhere,
tracking the soft shrills of newborn songbirds—?

Nicole Sealey



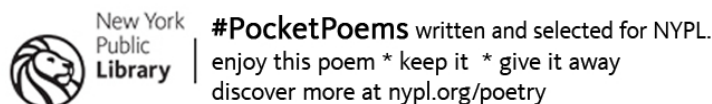
A TRUTH THAT TELLS YOU

I wish for you a small, portable truth you can take
anywhere—no foreign adaptors needed,
no translation required and nothing lost in it.

Once, looking at a map, my daughter said,
A river is a line the world drew for us. I wish for you
a truth that stays true across any line drawn

by the world or its people, a truth that tells you
wherever you arrive, you are welcome.

Maggie Smith



Systemic Risk

You can analyze systemic risk according to how many bodies live or die
If the system fails the broken bodies become invisible and/or hyper-visible
The people are being born and dying
They are enacting the invisibility of the security system through the exhibition of their
naked bodies
I eat corrupted data to keep my skin from becoming transparent
I would rather be a defect of culture than a defect of data or character
What is not observed gets more visible in relation to the strength of the surveillance
It's better to deprive a few million people of food than to pull the plug on the global
economy
If the consumers don't buy your product then teach them the meaning of love

Daniel Borzutzky



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Sun-Stuccos Caught Nearby In the Least

The image on my screen defeats the window
in front of me; a shadow behind the moon;
creation without prior text; LOVE as my first person.

Say one fruit for another fruit: Love, Apple, Ruth.
To be while continuing a little dying breeze over
and over again; till I go up, I am a case.

Catherine Blauvelt, NYPL



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Unconditional

If this black willow is calligraphy
then this white sky's an invitation
and requests the honor of your presence.
And you—will you attend?

Dora Malech



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THE MOON LETS GO

Years and years from now the earth will gain
another hour in its day, but I'll be dead then,
and everyone I love will be gone, too. At daycare dropoff,
my boys wave to me but kiss – *mwah! mwah!* – each other
through the pre-K room's goodbye window,
launching each smooch with a sticky hand and smacking it
against the glass. The moon is small and bound to us by gravity
that's slowly loosening its grip. I'd wanted them to love each other like this.

Nancy Reddy



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Parable of Joan Mitchell

Blue jail, teal jail, green jail, ochre jail, aqua jail, yellow jail, mustard jail, red jail, rose jail, magenta jail, platinum jail, charcoal jail, chartreuse jail, puce jail, pink jail, lilac jail, sunset jail, sail jail, soil jail, salmon jail, noise jail, blood clot jail, stair jail, rust jail, custard jail, snail shell jail, drip jail, grass jail, rhyme jail, dice jail, worm jail, circle jail, dot jail, clear jail, chrome jail, mail jail, air jail.

Daniel Poppick



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Plea

How when a body dies it becomes *the body*. No mind
to all the mouths who named it, who knew it in quiet, who call for it
now, unanswered. But know it: bear the cells' leaking out and pooling
where they're pulled to, bluebottles lapping at these final outputs, fur
around their mouths bloodied like winged wolves. Note them
as markers, makers beyond you. Watch the body age beyond itself, wage
against itself, overwintered. Count the cracks of cygnets hatching
in June. Let the prayer come out your mouth, just let it. The light
will regain its blueness, I know it.

* originally published in *The Manchester Review*

Caitlin Roach



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Helia

She eases us her brilliance upon us.

Slow. Careful.

Waking us with gentle hues that rock the soul like grandma's hands.

The brilliance of mid-day is a steady pulse.

She is proud of herself at the end of the day.

To rest she cloaks herself in the color of Queens.

First lilac. Then lavender. Then she drinks the wine of sleep.

Rhonda Evans, NYPL



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Mango Mañanas

I reached up
and picked a mango
from my grandmother's tree

She cut it into slices
added lime, salt and alguashte

That day we ate our native fruit
under the tropical Salvadoran sun
while a green little lizard looked up at our delicious fun.

María José Maldonado



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world around the

The eye does not see itself as a place to live.
The cruise ship parties on a bellyful of jellyfish.

Painted stars hold the cracked ceiling together.
Light falls and the sea is supportive.

My debt shoves me aside and grins at the camera.
When a number forgets where it started, it speculates.

Coins multiply in the frozen hearts of Bluefin tuna.
This old coin cannot bear its own head.

Caleb Klaces



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from *The Goodbyes*

Can I become closer to a portrait in my nature?
Less like something overheard in town,
but still a way to refer to oneself. Not
me or you, we or they but more
like Sylvia's dogwood is blooming &
Susie's are in blossom too.

Emily Sieu Liebowitz



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BEGINNING WITH A HORSE

A horse has six legs
two belong to a man
who might be Pluto
disguised as the devil
abducting a unicorn
whose horn was used
to purify a spring
that whetted the infinite
now behind us

Alan Felsenthal



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My Attendant

He saved the seeds
From an orange I ate.
I like it when he does
This but don't
Need these seeds.
"Good. I'll throw them."
As I wrest the Ziploc
From his hand
I peer into the eyes
Of my attendant.
I see there the strings
I have made taut,
That they are made
Of my own muscles.
I see them waiting
To be plucked by touch.

Jessica Laser



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VIOLIN

A violin filling with blue dusk
or else your voice
is a grotto inside a waterfall,
a house with four walls of rain
outside of which the birds
are patches of song
scissored
piecemeal
from the light.

Ian Brand, NYPL



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The cosmos:
a fluttering

colorful bird
that each night, we take out

to play on our fingers
as we sift through books

who eats small seeds
that look like stars

Mary Catherine Kinniburgh, NYPL



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The Hand People

A lot of what we know about earth comes from space
The trucker has a crush on Terry Gross. "Lovers
Of serial killers guarantee the persistence of art"*
Behind Cor-J seafood, big hooks bring to mind
The bouncing movement of a branch freed of snow
Tall woman in a cream pantsuit gripping the bar
With one hand holds New Lease on Love
Nails large round and flat like those of a saint

**Quoted from Andrei Codrescu*

Callie Garnett



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What Parks Are For

In a field, two Labrador retrievers
roll together, tongues out.
under an orange sky.

What have I lost that I cannot remember?

I think it is the color of that sky
and what the two dogs were trying to say with their eyes.

I bark like a cloud.

John Burns



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Soft

I have lost soft things
suddenly turned stiff
wept a wall of stone into my skin—
but your yellow eyes can already see through it
your moody meow already pricks up my ears
your heft has made a home on my hip;
I can't help but let you knead me
paw your way in

Jackie York, NYPL



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Oda a Pura Belpré

Ay dulce Pura, tu nombre lo dice todo
Siempre íntegra cual alma cálida en un mes de verano
Tus dotes de contar y cantar se hacen palpables por doquier
Con voz suave y sutil

Ay dulce Pura, tú que derrochas paz por donde quiera que vas
Brindando alegría a chicos y grandes
Con tus cuentos de antaño
Y tu folklore colosal

Ay dulce Pura, a pesar de no estar mas aquí
Tu espíritu brilla con luz sinigual
Y tu legado continúa muy presente
Tocando a toda la gente con tus espléndidos cuentos de siempre

María Isabel Molestina Triviño

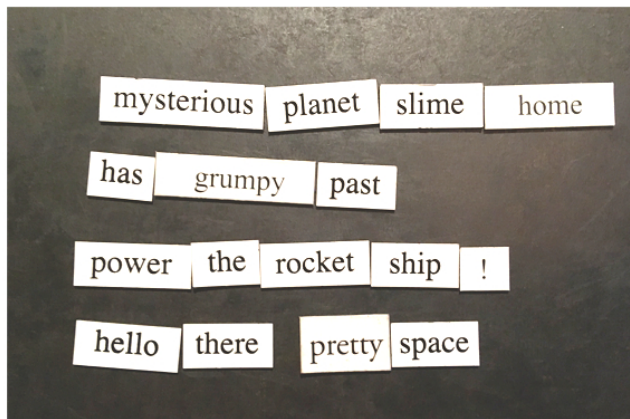


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Caroline Reichardt



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firefighter

I come from a long line of women who believed
that it's better to be on fire than to be a fool
so I'm teaching myself to cry again
hoping that these embers will be extinguished
hoping that at least one of us
can know the joy of water

Al Valentín



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You

are rogue balloon caught in revolving ceiling fan
speeding car in the emergency lane
the dog who wanders too far without a leash.

I try to ground you like chancletas do beach blankets
and hand holds on rollercoasters.

But we're the prizes discarded in the cereal box
socks lost in every wash
and the farmer's market haul
we swear we'll eat before it goes bad.

Katrina Ruiz



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Escribes un hayku
en una hoja de cuaderno.

Arrancas la hoja
la doblas y la doblas.

Por la ventana
se va el hayku
a las estrellas

hecho avioncito.

You write a haiku
on a sheet from a notebook.

You tear it out
and fold it and fold it.

Out the window
the haiku heads
for the stars
made into a little airplane.

Raúl Hernández
*translator: John Burns



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Monday, May 15, Sappho, WA—

a logging chapter is closed. Those
country maidens were good riders,
flowers blooming in an old bathtub,
cows grazing in an orchard. Their
garments neat as they should be. A
-cross the dirt road, peasant-girls
on the front porch—oh,
anyone would want to live
in the fenced area nearby. Anyone
would want a dress around her feet.

Sarah Dowling



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Shipwrecked

I feel no wonder
Looking down on my ship run aground
Decks and helm deserted
By the rage that filled the sails and rowed the oars
I can only wander along this salt coast
Collecting and discarding the memories I will need
As I continue on without them

Grace Yamada, NYPL



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[Every bare tree]

Every bare tree
is a silent
chorus of itself.

Robin Myers



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4ever 2morrow

I live in a world of my own
There's no place like home
Somewhere that makes you
Want to write a poem
Just imagine a nation
Where you can use your imagination
As a passport to the future
Using creation to get away like vacation

Mario Santana



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CONNECTIONS

All of my trains
arrive seconds too
late to catch your
closing doors.

Jason Baumann,
NYPL



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Royal Enfield

If we could remain
in that over-embrace a motorcycle demands
you think, as a dog
crosses the pavement
like a black stain,
your head lowered
to feel the speed rattle
through his spine, the crowns of the trees
recede into the distance and you tighten your grip
now that you're being pursued
by an idea: in the shade of those trees
together you will leave the motorcycle's body
where the chrome will fail to rust
and walk
each clutching a helmet.

Silvina López Medin

*Translated from the Spanish by: Jasmine V. Bailey

**This poem first appeared in *Brooklyn Rail's InTranslation*



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I Give You My Heart

I find myself on my feet with fifteen leaves. Everything carries
its own light on the walls.

I woke up to slaughter—my heart opening to cemeteries of moon,
to parasites, to drizzle, the mud crowning the undergrowth

with immense sadness. I knew death when I dressed in my uniform.
I found the index of solitude: my country in legal

jargon, its piety, its fiction—*Yes. It loves me, really.*

I give my blood as the blood of all fish.

Ricardo Alberto Maldonado



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Sun-Stuccos Caught Nearby In the Least

The image on my screen defeats the window
in front of me; a shadow behind the moon;
creation without prior text; LOVE as my first person.

Say one fruit for another fruit: Love, Apple, Ruth.
To be while continuing a little dying breeze over
and over again; till I go up, I am a case.

Catherine Blauvelt, NYPL



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When I say I'm Spanish, I mean

Yo soy Puertorriqueña through blood.
Culture runs through my body, stops
at my mind and my tongue speaks the language
foreign to my ancestors. Native tongue pronounces
a mixture of failure and American. I rarely speak
Spanish but I feel it in my mothers
hands when she tames my curls. When I walk
into her sofrito scented kitchen and open arms.
Saint candles burning the day away, my ancestors
humming in my blood.

Alysia Vargas



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Boys Accidentally Set Sail While Painting Yacht

A logbook of dirty Mad Libs.
Hooks without bait. Shucked skin.

They vow never to speak of what happens,
then nothing worth telling happens.

The moment of day when sky is dark
and sea is light reminds each of his other.

Jared Hayley



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Language

Nobody

will believe

I reached so far

on this old vehicle

of thought

Carla Faesler



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MOLECULE

Each molecule of water, bound by a
limelit orgy in the elevator before
internship to some cubic unit of sea reef
requiting birth, causes an eddy of
causality where sedimented rings appear
as vertical chutes in the heat of the
moment, leading straight from surface to
core, obfuscating the sweatshop of
historical accretions madly revolving to
support the spectacle drinking from a
cup, seeing “no manner of similitude.”

Cole Heinowitz



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Kintsugi

Gold in the cracks. Thank god the vessel was broken. Why did I believe that repair would never
mend it back to its beauty? Over the years, mending has become a monotony. Never mind the slow
burn of a porcelain birth—kiln of a million live embers. Repair this ewer with precious metals, let its
fractures show. Soak the shattered thing overnight in whole milk. Morning, wait for its whole.

Apply adhesive—
pinch of gold, silver of ash.
She was broken, thank
god.

Sally Wen Mao

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